UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS TEXAS 75202-2733

November 3, 1998

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

To Interested Agencies, Officials, Public Groups and Individuals,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has performed an environmental assessment in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 6, "*Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act,*" for the following proposed action:

Proposed Action: Berino Wastewater Collection and Treatment Facilities project to ensure and maintain adequate public and environmental health standards.

Applicant: The Community of Berino, Doña Ana County, New Mexico
NMED Project Number 193007

Total Estimated Project Capital Cost (Phase I): **$1,948,100.00**

Proposed Project. The community of Berino is an old, established unincorporated community in Doña Ana County, New Mexico, located off Interstate Highway 10 (IH-10), approximately 14 miles north of El Paso, Texas. The planning area is a designated "colonia" and has about 325 residential units and 1200 residents within the approximate 2,400 acres bounded by IH-10 to the east, the Kilgore lateral to the west, Fourth Street to the north, and Shrode Road to the south. The southern boundary is common to the northern boundary of a similar plan that was completed for Anthony, New Mexico, under the same Colonias program. Most of the Berino planning area does not have a sewage collection or wastewater treatment service. Residents use pit privies or septic tank systems that do not meet State or county standards and raise concerns over the potential health problems that may result from the failure of some of these systems. Many of the on-site systems are single compartment cesspool units with no leach field to provide for treatment and dispersal. They are not properly sized, sealed or constructed. Contamination of ground water is seen as inevitable as the area continues to develop with these on-site disposal systems.

The proposed project will be funded through a New Mexico Colonias Wastewater Construction Grant Program (CWCGP) partially funded by the EPA and administered by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The project will provide a sewer collection and treatment system for the densely populated area designated as Phase I. It will consist of 13,000 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer lines to collect the wastewater from 130 units in Berino

to a low point, where it will be lifted through a lift station and force main to the Anthony Wastewater Treatment Plant (AWTP). The system will also require design and construction of a lift station and a 23,000 foot wastewater force main from the community of Berino to the town of Anthony. The wastewater facilities planned for the community will be completed in seven phases. Drinking water for the planning area is provided by the Berino Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (MDWCA) system and the Desert Sands system. Only nine of the colonias have water service.

Finding. On the basis of this assessment, the EPA finds that proposed project to be consistent with the approved Water Quality Management Plan, and concurs with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) and the recommended alternatives. The Regional Administrator has determined that the funding assistance to the community of Berino will not result in significant adverse impacts on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not warranted. No new factors or issues have been introduced into the proposed action to alter the finding or to require an increase to the scope of the assessment. This evaluation is based primarily on the draft environmental assessment prepared in August 1998 by the NMED, Construction Programs Bureau for the CWCGP funding of the proposed Berino wastewater facilities, Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan, and the Environmental Information Document (EID) prepared by Wilson and Company. This EA covers the environmental impacts associated with Phases I through VII of the proposed projects which will be funded by phase. The Las Palmeras and Montana Vista areas which lie in the Phase IV portion of the planning area are not addressed by this assessment.

Comments regarding this decision not to prepare an EIS will be accepted during the thirty (30) day period following the public notice of this FNSI. This preliminary FNSI will become final after the 30-day public comment period expires if no new information is provided to alter this finding. No administrative action will be taken on the project for at least thirty calendar days after the release of this FNSI. A final decision will be made after all the written comments received have been evaluated. Address all comments and requests for review of the administrative record supporting this determination to:

Robert D. Lawrence (6EN-XP)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733
Telephone: (214) 665-2258

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

FOR CONSTRUCTION

OF THE WASTEWATER FACILITIES

PROPOSED FOR THE COMMUNITY OF

BERINO, DOÑA ANA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

United States Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202

Approved: //S-J.Clifford// 11/3/98
Gregg A. Cooke Date
Regional Administrator

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 General Information.

Proposed Action: Berino Wastewater Collection and Treatment Facilities project to ensure and maintain adequate public and environmental health standards.

Applicant: The Community of Berino, Doña Ana, New Mexico
NMED Project Number 193007

Total Estimated Project Capital Cost (Phase I): **$1,948,100.00**

1.2 Proposed Project. The community of Berino is an old, established unincorporated community located in an area that does not have sewage collection or wastewater treatment systems in place. Area residents use pit privies or septic tank systems that are not properly sized, sealed or constructed to meet State or county standards. Many of the systems are single compartment cesspool units with no leach field to provide for treatment and dispersal and there is concern over the potential health risks that may result from the failure of these disposal systems. Contamination of ground water is seen as inevitable as the area continues to develop with these on-site disposal systems. The proposed wastewater facilities project will be completed in seven phases (Fig.4) and will initially provide sewerage service for the area designated Phase I. The wastewater will be collected from 130 units in Berino[1] for treatment at the Anthony Wastewater Treatment Plant (AWTP). The system will also require design and construction of a lift station and a 23,000 foot wastewater force main from the community of Berino to the town of Anthony.

Berino is an old, established unincorporated located off Interstate Highway 10 (IH-10) in the Rio Grande Valley of extreme south-central New Mexico, approximately 14 miles north of El Paso, Texas (Fig.1). The planning area has about 325 residential units and 1200 residents, and consists of approximately 2,400 acres bounded by IH-10 to the east, the Kilgore lateral to the west, Fourth Street to the north, and Shrode Road to the south (Figure 3). The southern boundary is common to the northern boundary of a similar Colonias program plan that was completed for Anthony, New Mexico. This environmental assessment covers the environmental impacts of Phases I through VII of the proposed projects which will be funded by phase. The Las Palmeras and Montana Vista areas, which lie in the Phase IV portion of the planning area, are not covered in this assessment.

The Berino project is a designated “colonia” project funded through the New Mexico Colonias Wastewater Construction Grant Program (CWCGP) which is partially funded by the EPA and administered by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). Drinking water for the planning area is provided by the Berino Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association

(MDWCA) system and the Desert Sands system. Only nine of the colonias have water service.

1.3 Recommendation. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has performed an environmental assessment (EA) in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Part 6, "*Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act,*" of the draft environmental assessment prepared by the NMED Construction Programs Bureau for the proposed construction of the wastewater facilities for the community of Berino, New Mexico. On the basis of the assessment, the Regional Administrator has determined that the funding assistance will not result in any significant adverse impact on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not warranted. The EPA concurs with the recommended alternatives and finds the proposed project to be consistent with the EPA approved Water Quality Management Plan. Other sources of data for this assessment are the Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document (EID) prepared by Molzen-Corbin & Associates.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES.

2.1 Alternatives Available to the EPA.

Approve the Funding for the Project as Proposed. EPA can recommend approval of the grant funding for the proposed purpose.

Funding of a Modified Project. Information received during the EA process could result in the identification of significant adverse impacts that require modification. Modification of the project to mitigate the impacts may allow the EPA to accept the project as modified and recommend approval of the grant funding.

No Action. A determination that the project as proposed could result in potentially significant adverse impacts to the environment that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated would preclude a recommendation of approval of the grant funding. An EIS would then be recommended to evaluate the potentially significant impacts. The EIS process includes a scoping meeting to identify critical facts and issues, a Draft EIS, a public comment period on the Draft EIS, a public hearing on the Draft EIS, the Final EIS, a public comment period on the Final EIS, and a Record of Decision.

2.2 Alternatives Considered by the Applicant.

Five treatment alternatives were screened for detailed evaluation based on the following seven criteria: 1) technologies suitable for small communities, 2) ability for future expansion, 3) ability to meet effluent standards, 4) costs (capital and operation and maintenance), 5) ease and reliability of operation, 6) affect on local government(s), and 7) environmental impacts. In considering these criteria, new treatment facilities (i.e., total retention ponds and aerated lagoons) were determined to be costs prohibitive. An overland flow and infiltration alternative required sufficient slope and soil permeability not reflective on the project area. Conveyance of

wastewater to the Anthony Water and Sanitation District (AWSD) was viable due to the proximity and capacity of the plant. Constructed wetlands was also considered viable as a low maintenance, cost effective solution for further evaluation.

The three alternatives evaluated in more detail were no action, conveyance to the AWSD, and constructed wetlands. The "No Action" alternative was rejected because it does not serve the intended purpose and need of the project, and because of the potential for further ground water contamination and, thus, potential adverse impact on public health.

Created wetlands are a treatment process where the natural wetland concept is created for use in the treatment of domestic wastewater. The wastewater would be pumped to a large septic tank for primary treatment. From there, it would flow by gravity to a subsurface flow wetlands for secondary and advanced secondary treatment, and then to a free water surface wetlands for polishing. The effluent for the polishing wetland would be discharged into an infiltration basin. Land application to meet the discharge requirements may only be necessary during a portion of the year (e.g., during winter months when nitrification/denitrification rates are relatively low.

This wetlands alternative was not preferred because the collection system would have to include the cost of installing approximately 473 new septic tanks.[2] According to a survey, approximately thirty-five percent of the residences do not have septic tanks, and approximately sixty-six percent of the existing tanks are over five years old. In addition, there were potential odor problems associated with the wetlands located near to local residents, and compliance with ground water discharge regulations could not be assured.[3] The standards for BOD and TSS for New Mexico are relatively easily met with wetlands, but there was concern about the ability to meet the 10 mg/l nitrogen requirement.

Environmental benefits precluded by rejection of the wetlands alternative include creation of wildlife habitats. Such habitats have potential to provide benefits in the form of noise abatement, pollutant amelioration, wind reduction, temperature modification, and control of erosion and weedy invaders into the facility area.[4] The capital cost for this alternative is $1,869,000. The total equivalent annual cost for operation and maintenance based on a twenty year period and 8% interest was computed as $207,400.

The preferred alternative is conveyance of wastewater from the planning area to the treatment plant operated by the AWSD. The capital cost for this alternative is $1,948,100. The total equivalent annual cost for operation and maintenance based on a twenty-year period at 8% interest was computed as $242,800. This alternative may not provide the potential for recreation and open-space as does the wetlands wastewater treatment alternative, however, it will enable a higher level of treatment.[5]

The AWTP can discharge to surface waters or land apply at the Dos Lagos Golf Course under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit NM0029629, and the NMED ground water Discharge Plan No. DP-450. The AWTP currently discharges an average

of less than 600,000 gallons per day (gpd). The potential discharge from the planning area is

project to be approximately 102,000 gpd. The AWTP has adequate capacity to accept wastewater from Berino, although some lift stations may require upgrading.

The operation and maintenance of the proposed facilities will require a joint powers agreement between the AWSD and Doña Ana County. Doña Ana County has passed Resolution No. 96-36, establishing a county wide water and wastewater utility to serve its unincorporated areas and AWSD has agreed to accept the wastewater from Berino. Also, the EPA has made a grant to the NMED on behalf of Doña Ana County for contract services of a consultant for the Doña Ana County utility.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND PREDICTED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

3.1 Land Resources.

Land Use. Berino is a small unincorporated community of about 325 residential units and 1200 residents which are relatively low-income and minority. The community is predominantly residential with only a few businesses. Much of the land in the surrounding area is used for agricultural. There are two dairies in the area and a few other small businesses. Most of the residents are retirees or commuters to nearby urban centers.

The descriptions of the existing environment apply to the entire planning area. This includes the Las Palmeras and Montana Vista areas, which lie in the area designated as Phase IV. This environmental assessment does not consider the environmental impacts of the projects planned for the Las Palmeras and Montana Vista areas.

Soils. On-site soils are generally deep, nearly level, well drained soils formed in alluvium, flood plains and stream terraces. Most of the Phase I area consists of Adelino sandy clay loam and Canutio and Arizo gravelly sandy loams. The Adelino clay loam is a deep, well drained, nearly level soil that is typically 8 to15 feet above the flood plain of the Rio Grande. Permeability is moderate and the available water capacity is high. The Canutio and Arizo sandy loams are gently sloping soils on fans, terraces, valley floors, and wide arroyos above the Rio Grande flood plain. These soils are deep and well drained with moderately rapid permeability. The terrain in the area is characterized by gently sloping plains from the east to the Rio Grande. Elevation ranges from about 3,700 feet to 4,400 feet above mean sea level (msl). Water tables are typically greater than 6 feet in depth and permeability is fairly rapid.

Site and Land Use. The community is predominantly residential with very few commercial or institutional areas.[6] The population in the facility planning area was estimated to be close to 1,200 persons presently and projected to be about 2,000 by the year 2014. The Phase I area population is presently about 407 with infill expected to result in 490 people.

Land Use Changes. The project planning area is predominantly located on privately owned

property for which easements will be obtained. A small section of the project area is on land owned by Doña Ana County, the recipient of the grant to complete this project. Doña Ana County is expected to provide the required easement for the project. There is no conflict with local, regional or State land use plans or policies. There will be no adverse impact on the pattern and type of land use, or the growth and distribution of population. Long term impacts associated with this project will be minimal and will not be significantly adverse because all construction will occur in established, developed areas. There will be disruption of the terrain and soils in the area during construction of the facility and good construction practices such as proper bedding, compaction and grading of the soils should prevent any long-term adverse environmental impacts on the area.

3.2 Water Resources.

Surface water quantity. There are no surface water impoundments in the planning area. The closest water course is the Rio Grande which is to the west. The area is served by the Berino MDWCA and the Desert Sands MDWCA water systems (Fig.3). The Berino MDWCA system serves the northern portion of the planning area, while the Desert Sands MDWCA system serves the remaining 266 residential customers. The two systems service a larger area than the planning area.

Ground water. The proposed project will have no significant adverse impact on ground water quantity. By letter dated July 13, 1998, the NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau determined that the proposed project would have no significant adverse impact on ground water quality, and that the treatment of wastewater from the McAnally Egg Farm could have a beneficial effect on ground water quality.[7] Depth to significant ground water in the area ranges from 25 to 100 feet.

Currently, wastewater in the project area is treated by on-site septic tanks or cesspools through percolation. As the population of the planning area increases, the potential for ground water contamination from the on-site wastewater disposal systems will increase. The proposed Berino wastewater facilities will diminish or eliminate the degradation of ground water and will improve its quality. The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission has expressed concern that the return flow from ground water to surface water would ultimately result in the water being carried out of the state.

Wastewater. Wastewater from the planning area will be collected and transferred to the AWTP operated by the AWSD for treatment. The AWSD has brought a new activated sludge facility on line that is designed for nitrogen and phosphorous removal. Through a joint powers agreement between the County of Doña Ana and the AWSD, the AWSD will operate and maintain the collection system, lift station and force main (Figures 5 and 6). Berino will generate an estimated 35,000 gpd in Phase I, which is expected to increase to 42,000 gpd. The wastewater flow from the entire planning area is estimated at 102,000 gpd.

Flows from the planning area will increase the flow to and discharge from the AWTP, but will not exceed the 980,000 gpd design capacity of the treatment plant. The semi-arid climate of

the region allows the mean annual evaporation, estimated at 5 feet per year, to exceed annual precipitation, which averages less than 8 inches per year. This means that there will be no significant infiltration or inflow into the system expected from seasonal storm events. Also, there are no significant commercial or industrial flows in the planning area, with relatively little expected in the future. The NPDES permit does not limit the volume of discharge, but does require reporting of the quantity of flow. According to the Discharge Monitoring Reports for the period of October 1996 to October 1997, the present flow averages 547,000 gpd. The project will have no significant adverse impact on surface water quantity. The NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau has determined that the proposed project conforms "with the Clean Water Act requirements under Sections 303(e) and 208(b)(1)(A) and the State of New Mexico's Continuing Planning Process (CPP)."

The abandoned lined aeration basins, the sludge drying beds, and the plant effluent applied to the Dos Lagos Golf Course are covered under the discharge plan for the AWTP, modified by the NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau on July 20, 1998. The modified operation plan allows the use of treated effluent for irrigation of the golf course. The discharge from the AWTP to the Elephant Butte Irrigation District's East Anthony Drain under NPDES Permit No. NM0029629 will go to Rio Grande Basin Segment No. 2-101 which has been identified as a water quality limited stream segment.[8] Limited Warm Water Fishery and Irrigation were designated uses which were not fully supported by this stream segment. Data collected since that time, demonstrates that the stream segment fully supports all designated uses.[9]

A site specific storm water pollution prevention plan and a Notice of Intent to discharge storm water from a construction site may be required if the site is five acres or more.[10] Sediments generated by construction, and the associated erosion and siltation of area waterways will be controlled by the best available control standards, such as temporary settling pits, dikes, and berms. Prompt backfilling of trenches and protecting soil stockpiles will also serve to reduce any potential problems.

3.3 Air Quality. Southern Doña Ana County is part of the Rio Grande valley agricultural belt and has little industrial activity to contribute emissions into the ambient air. Seasonal dust storms have caused the fugitive dust health-based air quality standard for particular matter (PM_{10}) to be exceeded. However, under a new EPA policy, the area may be designated a "natural event area" rather than a "non-attainment area." During construction, appropriate dust suppression techniques will be employed.[11] Construction should be conducted during less windy or moister times of the year. There are fewer exceedances of the PM_{10} standard in July through September. The period of December through February would be better for construction than the months of March through June, and October and November, which are the windier months of the year. Odors are experienced from overflowing cesspools and septic tanks in the area. The impact of this project to air quality is temporary and minimal. The project will have no significant adverse impact on air quality.

Noise. There are no significant contributors to air and noise pollution other than the traffic in the area.[12] There will be added noise during the construction of the project, however the effects will

be temporary and insignificant. No mitigation measures are required. The project will have no significant adverse impact on noise levels.

3.4 Biotic Resources.

The area is typical of the Mesilla valley which is primarily an irrigated, agricultural area. The primary crops are cotton and alfalfa. There are no expected impacts on the biology, wildlife habitat, or any endangered species from the project improvements. The plant site is located in an open area where there is no development and little wildlife. The potential for wildlife and endangered species is minimal due to the soil conditions, cultivation activities and development. Once the facilities are in place, the components will be completely enclosed, reducing the potential for disease transmission by vectors.

3.5 Cumulative Impacts and Other Environmental Considerations.

Cultural Resources. The State of New Mexico Office of Cultural Affairs has recommended that a cultural resources survey be conducted prior to construction[13] Due to the prior modification of the land surface by agriculture and urban development, historic or prehistoric archeological sites that may have been present in the area have probably been destroyed or substantially altered. However, all grant or loan activity will be conditioned to require that if any historic or prehistoric archeological sites are discovered during construction, activity will cease immediately in that area, the site will be protected from further disturbance, and the EPA, the NMED and the State Historic Preservation Officer will be informed of the discovery. The EPA and the NMED shall than proceed in accordance with the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR Part 800) prior to taking any action which would affect the cultural resources.

Wetlands Protection and Floodplain Management. According to the National Wetlands Inventory Map, most of the facility planning area is upland (non-wetland). Two laterals lie within the project planning area: the Kilgore Lateral and the Anthony Lateral. The Kilgore Lateral lies within the area designated as Phase V. The Anthony Lateral passes through the Phase VII, Phase III and Phase IV areas. The designation in the National Wetland Inventory Map for these laterals is R4SBKCx. This designation indicates that the wetland system is riverine, that flow is intermittent and that the wetland is a stream bed which is seasonally flooded artificially. Another wetland lies in the Phase IV area. The inventory designation for this wetland is PUBKFx. This designation indicates that the system is Palustrine, the class is unconsolidated bottom and the subclass is artificially flooded subtidal.[14]

The planning area is predominantly outside the 100-year floodplain area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) has advised that the proposed wastewater collection facilities will cross dry arroyos considered to be waters of the U.S., but can be constructed under the authority of Nationwide Permit No. 12, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 CFR 330). Nationwide Permit No. 12 authorizes discharges of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States for utility line backfill and bedding.[15]

Prime farmlands. The site contains no prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland.[16] No mitigation measures are required. The project will have no significant adverse impact on prime farmlands.

Fish and Wildlife Resources, including Endangered Species. Because of the intense agricultural and urban development of the project area, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated on wetlands or other important wildlife resources, including endangered species. The The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was informally consulted and determined that the project will have no effect on Federally listed species, and no formal Section 7 consultation should be necessary.

The Rio Grande lies outside of the facility planning area and no control of or structural modification to any natural stream or water body will result from construction of the proposed

project. Thus, the project will require no permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Environmental Justice Issues and Socioeconomic. Although the use of the Environmental Justice (EJ) index tool in this instance is limited, a high EJ indicator, coupled with the beneficial nature of the environmental impacts associated with the project, gives the project a high priority and makes it a prime target for assistance. The EJ analysis is based on a comparison of (1) the percentage of minority people, (2) the percentage of economically stressed households making less than $15,000 a year, and (3) the population within a one-half mile and a four-mile radius of the site with the corresponding percentages for the state. Based on a 3.7 average number of persons per household, the projected high growth population for the planning area is estimated to reach almost 2,000 by the year 2014. According to the 1990 Census, the per capita income in the Anthony Division of Doña Ana County is $5,960.00. The Median Household Income is $18,081.00.

Berino is an old, established relatively low-income, minority community of Mexican extraction with more than half the residents below the poverty level as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Growth potential for Berino is moderate, particularly since it offers only marginal water service and no wastewater services. Its development has proceeded without zoning or planning as colonias often do as a means for low-income families to own their own home. The planning area is comprised of over sixty percent minority and is classified a low income area. The make up of the area's population, its high population density, and the annual household income levels all indicate that the area is economically stressed.

The population in the facility planning area is estimated as close to 1,200 persons and projected to increase to about 2000 by the year 2014. The Phase I area population is presently about 407 with infill expected to result in 490 people."[17] For Phase I and Phase II, the user fees have been estimated as $17.00/month.[18] A user charge survey completed by the NMED indicates that the lowest monthly sewer rate charge in the state is $2.00, the average rate is $11.36 and the highest rate is $29.74. An additional fee of $1, 300 will be assessed as a connection fee by the AWSD.[19] The sewer user fee of $17.00/month may result in an adverse

economic impact to some residents, and the economic impact of the connection fees may be mitigated with grant funds available to individuals from the Rural Development Administration.

Transportation. Traffic disruption will be minimal on the majority of the collection lines because of the minimal traffic normally on these roads.

Cross-border Impacts. The primary adverse effects beyond the national boundary are limited to the periodic excursions of odors across the border from the wastewater treatment plant particularly during abnormal weather conditions. These events will be infrequent and of short duration, and will be attenuated primarily by the distance between the source plants and the sparsely populated areas across the border. Of significant benefit to the environment is the improved quality of the wastewater after treatment which will not have the same potential to be a source of odors. Other beneficial impacts expected from construction of the projects are the

reduction in potential health vectors and communicable diseases through the elimination of the use of septic systems and privies.

A potential by-product of the proposed treatment plants that may have both adverse and beneficial impacts on the socio-economic fabric of the area is the increased growth and development. The existence of a system to handle the wastewaters may make it more appealing to industry and immigrants and tend to overload the system. However, these same phenomena may make it possible to improve the socio-economic well-being of residents of the area.

National Natural Landmarks. The Kilbourne Hole is the only natural landmark in Doña Ana County. It does not lie in the facility planning area.[20] No mitigation measures are required. The project will have no significant adverse impact on national natural landmarks.

Other Factors. The proposed project site is predominantly privately owned land, with a small section of the land owned by Doña Ana County, the grant recipient. Doña Ana County will provide the necessary easement for the project. There are no coastal zones or barrier islands in the facility planning area. The Rio Grande River is in the vicinity of the project planning area, but does not lie within the planning area. According to the Nationwide Rivers Inventory prepared by the U.S. National Park Service, the only portion of the Rio Grande in the Wild and Scenic River System is the 196-mile section from the Chihuahua/Coahuila state line in Mexico to the Terrell/Val Verde county line in Texas. That portion of the Rio Grande is approximately 300 miles downriver of the Berino planning area. The project will have no significant adverse impact on parklands, preserves, public lands, coastal zone management areas, barrier islands or wild and scenic rivers. No mitigation measures are required.

4.0 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONSIDERED BY EPA

4.1 Unavoidable Adverse Effects.

No significant adverse impacts on natural resources, water, wastewater, and other

community infra-structures such as public schools, emergency medical care, or public safety, recreation or transportation are expected to result from the direct, secondary or cumulative effects of the operational facility. The population of the planning area is projected to increase to about 2000 by the year 2014. The Phase I area population is presently about 407 with infill expected to result in 490 people. For Phase I and Phase II, the user fees have been estimated as $17.00/month. An additional fee of $1, 300 will be assessed as a connection fee by the AWSD. .

4.2 Relationship Between Local, Short Term Use of the Environment and the Maintenance/Enhancement of Long Term Beneficial Uses.

Construction and operation of the proposed system will result in medium to high benefits to the health and economy of the area. In the short term, there will be the inconveniences, the dust and sedimentation resulting from the disturbance of the area for trenching of streets and the connecting pathways to the AWTP. However, the long term beneficial uses of the environment will result in better social and community setting because of the correction of a public health and safety hazard.

There are no unacceptable short or long term impacts to sensitive habitat, jurisdictional wetlands, or endangered or threatened species of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fishes are expected as a result of this project. Therefore, no mitigation action is proposed. No other local, state, or federal projects are planned or underway in the project area.

4.3 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources.

Irreversibly and irretrievably committed resources associated with the facility are primarily the materials needed for the construction, the fossil fuels and energy resources needed to operate the facility.

5.0 ENTITIES TO WHOM COPIES OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WERE MAILED FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT

Copies of the EA have been provided to the following agencies and will be provided to groups, officials, and individuals on the general mailing list for review and comment. Interested parties may obtain copies of the EA by contacting the EPA, Office of Planning and Coordination (6EN-XP), 1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733, or telephone 214-665-2258.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
U.S. National Park Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Construction Operation Division - Regulatory Office
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Services - Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Ecological Services
Federal Emergency Management Agency
International Boundary and Water Commission

New Mexico Office of Cultural Affairs - State Historical Preservation Officer
New Mexico Environment Department - Ground Water Quality Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department - Surface Water Quality Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department - Air Quality Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department, District III Manager, Las Cruces
New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission
Doña Ana County, Grants Administrator
Doña Ana County, Director of Planning and Development
Berino MDWCA
Desert Sands MDWCA
Molzen-Corbin & Associates
Anthony Water and Sanitation District

6.0 MAPS AND COORDINATION LETTERS

NOT PROVIDED IN ELECTRONIC VERSION

7.0 REFERENCES AND ENDNOTES

Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document, November 1996, Molzen-Corbin & Associates

Surface Management Responsibility, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, 1994

Water Resources of the Rincon and Mesilla Valleys and Adjacent Areas, New Mexico State Engineer Office, Technical Report No. 43, 1981

Standards for Interstate and Intrastate Streams, New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission, January 23, 1995

Water Quality and Pollution Control in New Mexico, Report to Congress, State of New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission, September 1994

DRAFT, 1998-2000 State of New Mexico Draft §303 (d) List for Assessed River/Stream Reaches Requiring Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), Record of Decision (ROD) for River/Stream Listings, New Mexico Environment Department, Surface Water Quality Bureau, March 10, 1998

Municipal Water and Wastewater User Charge Survey, New Mexico Environment Department Construction Programs Bureau, January 17, 1997

Doña Ana County Final Regional Wastewater Facilities Master Plan, August 1998, Molzen-Corbin & Associates

New Mexico Environment Department, Air Quality Bureau, Letter of December 23, 1996
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit No. NM0029629, Anthony
Discharge Monitoring Reports for the Anthony Wastewater Treatment Facility
New Mexico 1990 Census and Median Household Income

ENDNOTES:

1. Table 6-1 of the Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan.

2. Based on 1994 figures.

3. Vado/Del Cerro Facilities Plan, ¶5.2.6; USEPA Operation of Wastewater Treatment Plants, Vol.1.

4. Letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

5. Letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

6. Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document, Appendix A.

7. Katherine Yuhas Letter, NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau, July 13, 1998.

8. New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission Report to Congress for 1994.

9. 1998-2000 State of New Mexico DRAFT, §303(d), List for Assessed River/Stream Reaches Requiring TMDLs.

10. Jim Davis Memorandum, NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau, July 13, 1998.

11. Jim Nellesen Letter, NMED Air Quality Bureau, July 6, 1998.

12. Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document, Appendix A.

13. Eric Petersen Letter, Office of Cultural Affairs Historic Preservation Division, July 27, 1998.

14. National Wetlands Inventory.

15. Daniel Manachuk Letter, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, July 10, 1998.

16. U.S. Dept.of Agriculture, Farmland Conversion Impact Rating, July 10, 1998, and USDA, Prime Farmland Survey.

17. Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document, Appendix A.

18. Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document, Table 11-1

19. Berino Wastewater Facilities Plan and Environmental Information Document ¶8.3

20. National Registry of Natural Landmarks.